

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

**BOARD OF LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS,
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
PROFESSIONALS**

TITLE OF REGULATIONS: 18 VAC 115-50-10 et seq.

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PRACTICE OF MARRIAGE AND
FAMILY THERAPY**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY: §§ 54.1-2400 and 54.1-3500 et seq. of the
Code of Virginia**

[Final Regulations](#)

[Adopted November 19, 1999](#)

PART I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

18 VAC 115-50-10. Definitions.

A. The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the meaning ascribed to them in § 54.1-3500 of the *Code of Virginia*: (i) “board,” (ii) “marriage and family therapy,” (iii) “marriage and family therapist,” and (iv) “practice of marriage and family therapy.”

B. The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

~~“AAMFT” means the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, or an organization deemed substantially equivalent by the Board.~~

“CACREP” means the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs.

“COAMFTE” means the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

“Internship” means a supervised, planned, practical, advanced experience ~~of at least one year, involving direct client contact with individuals, couples and families in a~~ obtained ~~in the~~ clinical setting ~~in which the advanced student will observe, diagnose and treat, through the application of~~ observing and applying the principles, methods and techniques learned in training or educational settings.

“Regional accrediting agency” means one of the regional accreditation agencies recognized by the United States Secretary of Education as responsible for accrediting senior post-secondary institutions and training programs.

“Residency” means a post-internship, supervised clinical experience registered with the board.

“Resident” means an individual who has submitted a supervisory contract to the board and has received board approval to provide clinical services in marriage and family therapy under supervision.

“Supervision” means an ongoing process ~~in which a practitioner qualified to supervise in the discipline of marriage and family therapy performed by a supervisor who~~ monitors the performance of the person supervised and provides regular, documented,

face-to-face guidance, instruction ~~and evaluation of~~ with respect to the clinical skills
and competencies of the person or persons being supervised.

PART II

APPLICATION FOR LICENSURE

18 VAC 115-50-30. Application for licensure by examination.

Every applicant for examination for licensure by the board shall:

1. Meet the education and experience requirements prescribed in 18 VAC 115-50-50, [18 VAC 115-50-55](#) and 18 VAC 115-50-60.
2. Submit to the board office in one package, the following items, not less than 90 days prior to the date of the examination:
 - a. A completed application;
 - b. The application fee prescribed in 18 VAC 115-50-20;

- c. Documentation, on the appropriate forms, of the successful completion of the ~~supervised experience~~ residency requirements of 18 VAC 115-50-60 along with documentation of the supervisor's out-of-state license where applicable;
- d. Official transcript or transcripts in the original sealed envelope with the registrar's signature across the sealed envelope flap submitted from the appropriate institutions of higher education directly to the applicant, verifying satisfactory completion of the education requirements set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-50 and 18 VAC 115-50-55. Previously submitted transcripts for registration of supervision do not have to be resubmitted; and
- e. Verification, on a board-approved form that any out-of-state license, certification or registration is in good standing.

18 VAC 115-50-40. Application for licensure by endorsement.

Every applicant for licensure by endorsement shall submit in one package:

1. A completed application;

2. The application fee prescribed in 18 VAC 115-50-20; and
3. Documentation of licensure as follows:
 - a. Documentation of a current marriage and family therapy license in good standing obtained by standards substantially equivalent to those outlined in 18 VAC 115-50-50, [18 VAC 115-50-55](#), 18 VAC 115-50-60 and 18 VAC 115-50-70 as verified by ~~the out-of-state licensing agency on a board-approved form~~ a current official transcript and certified copy of the original application materials; or
 - b. If currently holding an unrestricted license as a professional counselor in Virginia, documentation of successful completion of the requirements set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-50, [18 VAC 115-50-55](#) and 18 VAC 115-50-60; ~~or~~.
 - ~~b. Prior to July 9, 1998, documentation of having met the requirements set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-80.~~

18 VAC 115-50-50. ~~Education requirements for licensure examination.~~ [Degree program requirements.](#)

A. The applicant shall have completed ~~60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of graduate~~

~~study in marriage and family~~; a graduate degree from a program that prepares individuals to practice marriage and family therapy or a discipline related to the practice of marriage and family therapy as defined in § 54.1-3500 of the Code of Virginia; from a ~~regionally accredited college or university or a post-degree training institute accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education, to include a graduate degree in marriage and family therapy or a related discipline which is accredited by a regional accrediting agency and which meets the following criteria:~~

~~1. Was accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education prior to the applicants graduation from the program; or~~

1. There must be a sequence of academic study with the expressed intent to prepare students to practice marriage and family therapy as documented by the institution;

2. There must be an identifiable marriage and family therapy training faculty and an identifiable body of students who complete that sequence of academic study; and

3. The academic unit must have clear authority and primary responsibility for the core and specialty areas.

B. Programs that are approved by CACREP [as programs in marriage and family

counseling/therapy] or [by] COAMFTE are recognized as meeting the definition of a graduate degree program that prepares individuals to practice marriage and family therapy or a ~~related~~-discipline [related to the practice of marriage and family therapy] as defined in §54.1-3500 of the Code of Virginia.

18 VAC 115-50-55. Course work requirements.

~~2. Consisted of a sequential, integrated program~~ A. The applicant shall have completed 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of graduate study in the following core areas with a minimum of ~~nine~~ six semester hours or ~~12~~ nine quarter hours completed in each of core areas identified in subdivisions ~~2a~~ 1 and ~~2b~~ 2 of this ~~section~~ subsection, and three semester hours or 4.5 quarter hours in each of the core areas identified in subdivisions 3 through 6 of this subsection (suggested courses are listed in parenthesis after each core area):

~~a~~ 1. Marriage and family studies (marital and family development; family systems theory);

~~b~~ 2. Marriage and family therapy (systemic therapeutic interventions and application of major theoretical approaches);

~~e.3.~~ Human development (theories of counseling; psychotherapy techniques with individuals; human growth and life span development; personality theory; psychopathology; human sexuality; multicultural issues);

~~d.4.~~ Professional studies (professional identity and function; ethical and legal issues);

~~e.5.~~ Research (research methods; quantitative methods; statistics);

~~f.6.~~ Assessment and treatment (appraisal, assessment and diagnostic procedures); and

~~g.7. Internship (minimum of one year, to include 300 hours of supervised direct client contact with individuals, couples and families).~~ Supervised internship of 600 hours to include 240 hours of direct client contact. Three hundred of the internship hours and 120 of the direct client contact hours shall be with couples and families.

B. If the graduate hours in marriage and family therapy were begun prior to [[January 19, 2000](#)], the board may accept those hours if they meet the requirements which were in effect on July 9, 1997.

18 VAC 115-50-60. ~~Supervised clinical experience~~ Residency.

A. Registration.

1. Applicants who render counseling services in a nonexempt setting shall:
 - a. With their supervisor, register their supervisory contract on the appropriate forms for board approval before starting to practice under supervision;
 - b. Have submitted an official transcript documenting a graduate degree as specified in 18 VAC 115-50-50 to include completion of the internship requirement specified in 18 VAC 115-50-55; and
 - c. Pay the registration fee.
2. Applicants in exempt settings may register supervision with the board to assure acceptability at the time of application.

A. B. Residency requirements.

1. The applicant shall have completed at least two years of supervised post-graduate degree experience, representing no fewer than 4,000 hours of

supervised work experience, to include 200 hours of face-to-face supervision with the supervisor in the practice of marriage and family therapy. Residents shall receive a minimum of one hour of face-to-face supervision for every 20 hours of supervised work experience. No more than 100 hours of the supervision may be acquired through group supervision, with the group consisting of no more than six residents. ~~Two hours~~ One hour of group supervision ~~shall will be deemed equivalent to one hour of individual face-to-face supervision.~~

2. Of the 4,000 hours stipulated, at least ~~1000~~ 2000 hours must be acquired in direct client contact of which ~~500~~ 1000 hours shall be with couples or families or both.
3. The ~~supervised experience~~ residency shall consist of practice in the core areas set forth in ~~18 VAC 115-50-50~~ 18 VAC 115-50-55.
4. ~~Supervised experience~~ The residency shall begin after the completion of a master's degree in marriage and family therapy or a related discipline as set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-50. ~~However, internship hours completed by a graduate of a Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education accredited program as part of the graduate degree may count toward~~

~~the 4,000 hours of supervised experience.~~

5. A ~~post-master's~~ degree-graduate-level internship completed in a program that meets the requirements of this subsection set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-50 may count ~~toward~~ for no more than 600 of the required 4000 hours of experience. However, all 4000 hours shall be continuous and integrated and shall, without exception, be conducted under qualified registered supervision. The internship shall include 20 hours of face-to-face on-site supervision, and 20 hours of face-to-face off-site supervision. Internship hours shall not begin until completion of 30 semester hours toward the graduate degree.
6. In order for a graduate level internship to be counted toward a residency, either the clinical or faculty supervisor shall be licensed as set forth in subsection C of this section.
- ~~6.~~ 7. Residents shall not call themselves marriage and family therapists, solicit clients, bill for services rendered or in any way represent themselves as marriage and family therapists. During the residency, they may use their names, the initials of their degree and the title "Resident in Marriage and Family Therapy." Clients shall be informed in writing of the resident's status, along with the name, address and telephone number of the resident's supervisor.

~~7.~~ 8. Residents shall not engage in practice under supervision in any areas for which they do not have appropriate education.

~~8.~~ 9. Residents who do not become candidates for licensure after five years of supervised training shall submit an explanation to the board stating reasons the residency should be allowed to continue.

~~B.C.~~ B.C. Supervisory requirements.

1. ~~Prior to July 9, 2,000, any~~ A person who provides supervision for a resident in marriage and family therapy shall be licensed as a marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker or psychiatrist ~~and shall be able to document on a board approved training form specific training in the supervision of marriage and family therapy in the jurisdiction where the supervision is being provided.~~ Supervisors shall document two years post-licensure marriage and family therapy experience.

~~2. After July 9, 2,000, all supervision shall be provided by a licensed marriage and family therapist or a licensed professional counselor, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker or psychiatrist who meets the requirements of 18 VAC 115-50-50~~

~~and 18 VAC 115-50-60, and who is able to document on a board approved form specific training in the supervision of marriage and family therapy.~~

~~3.~~ 2. Supervision by an individual whose relationship to the resident is deemed by the board to compromise the objectivity of the supervisor is prohibited.

~~4.~~ 3. The supervisor shall assume full responsibility for the clinical activities of residents as specified within the supervisory contract, for the duration of the ~~supervised experience~~ residency.

~~C. Registration of Supervision. Individuals registering supervision with the board shall submit in one package:~~

~~1. A completed Registration of Supervision form;~~

~~2. The registration fee set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-20; and~~

~~3. Official graduate transcript or transcripts in the original sealed envelope with the Registrar's signature across the sealed enveloped flap submitted from the appropriate institution of higher education directly to the applicant, verifying satisfactory completion of the education requirements set forth in 18 VAC 115-50-~~

~~50.~~

PART III
EXAMINATION FOR LICENSURE

18 VAC 115-50-70. General examination requirements.

- A. All applicants for initial licensure shall pass an examination, with a passing score as determined by the board.

- B. The examination shall concentrate on the core areas of marriage and family therapy set forth in ~~subdivision A 2~~ subsection A of ~~18 VAC 115-50-50~~ 18 VAC 115-50-55.

- C. Approved applicants shall sit for the examination within 2 years from the initial notification date of approval. Failure to do so will result in the revocation of approval and obligate the applicant to file a new application for examination.

- D. Applicants who fail the examination twice in succession shall document completion of 45 clock hours of additional education or training ~~for each area~~ acceptable to the board addressing the areas of deficiency as reported in the examination results prior to

obtaining board approval for reexamination.

18 VAC 115-50-80. ~~Waiver of examination requirement. (Repealed.)~~

~~Prior to July 9, 1998, individuals who can document meeting the criteria in one of the following categories shall be licensed without examination:~~

~~1. Current and unrestricted professional counselor license in Virginia along with completion of four of the seven core course work requirements outlined in 18 VAC 115-50-50; or~~

~~2. Clinical membership in the AAMFT and:~~

~~a. A passing grade on the AAMFT examination as determined by the board; or~~

~~b. Ten years continuous practice in marriage and family therapy along with three letters attesting to competency to practice from professionals who are either licensed mental health professionals or AAMFT supervisors.~~

PART IV

RENEWAL AND REINSTATEMENT OF LICENSE

18 VAC 115-50-90. Biennial renewal of license.

A. All licensees shall renew licenses on or before June 30 of each odd-numbered year.

~~A.~~ B. All licensees who intend to continue to practice shall on or before the expiration date of the license submit to the board:

1. A license renewal application supplied by the board; and
2. The renewal fee prescribed in 18 VAC 115-50-20.

~~B.~~ C. Failure to receive a renewal notice from the board shall not relieve the license holder from the renewal requirement.

~~C.~~ D. Licensees shall provide the board with official documentation of a legal name change and written notification of address changes within 90 days of such change.

Certification

I certify that this regulation is full, true, and correctly dated.

Evelyn B. Brown
Executive Director
Virginia Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, Marriage and
Family Therapist and Substance Abuse Treatment Professionals

Date: _____

FINAL REGULATION SUBMISSION PACKAGE

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PRACTICE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

18 VAC 115-50-10 et seq.

REPORTING FORMS

Marriage and Family Therapist Licensure Application MFTAPP1, rev. 7/99.

Board of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists Courses Outline Form.

Licensure Verification of Applicant, MFTAPP2, rev. 7/99

Verification of Supervision for Marriage and Family Therapist Licensure, MFTAPP3, rev. 7/99.

Quarterly Evaluation Form, MFTAPP3B, eff. 8/99.

Licensure Verification of Out-of-State Supervisor, MFTAPP4, rev. 7/99.

Licensure Verification of Applicant

Courses Outline Form for Marriage and Family Therapist Licensure, MFTAPP5, eff. 7/97.

Verification of Internship, MFTAPP6, eff. 8/99.

Verification of Internship Hours Toward the Residency, MFTAPP 7, eff. 8/99.

Registration of Supervision for Marriage and Family Therapist Licensure, MFTREG1, rev. 8/99.

Supervisor's Experience and Education.

Renewal Notice and Application.

Courses Outline Form.

[Renewal Notice and Application, C-45128, rev. 8/97.](#)
[\[Supervision Outline Form for Marriage and Family Therapist Endorsement Applicants, eff. 12/99\]](#)